

F E B R U A R Y

1996

OPEN ARMS

VOL. 8 NUMBER 2

..... MICHIANA'S LESBIAN NEWSLETTER

TOWARD THE YEAR 2000

Ohio's first women's health conference
by Melissa Thomas

September 21 marked *Toward the Year 2000: Improving Women's Health in Ohio*, the first statewide conference on women's health issues. The conference provided an interdisciplinary perspective, giving participants an opportunity to select a specific track of issues to follow for the three day event. The latest research and prevention in women's health today were explored; Ohio women and their health concerns were also addressed. Everybody from incarcerated women to lesbians had a voice at the conference, and although only slightly fewer than 300 participants from across the state attended, it was considered a success on the basis of its content and speakers.

Dr. Bernadine Healy, immediate past Director of the National Institutes and incoming dean at the Ohio State University College of Medicine, was the conference's keynote speaker. She mentioned a number of women's health issues across our life spans by highlighting her new book, *A New Prescription in Women's Health*. Topics included nutrition, reproductive health, cancer and depression. Most importantly, her address mentioned the importance of the health care encounter for women, and she stressed the need to be able to talk openly with your doctor.

Toward the Year 2000 featured several highlights, from Dr. Healy's address to Jeanne Robertson's motivational speech, which offered a really comical outlook on life. For me, however, the true highlight was hearing Dr. Holly Barrows speak on lesbian health issues. Dr. Barrows has spent 12 years in private practice helping all kinds of women with their health concerns, and she has served as a resource to lesbians by distributing lesbian literature and taking the extra step to listen to the needs of her lesbian patients.

Dr. Barrows provided the audience in one of two diversity sessions a wealth of information about the difficulties lesbians encounter in health care. She mentioned that in addition to very few studies ever having been conducted on lesbians and health issues, most articles that are written are seldom published or mainstreamed into women's health. The difficulties this situation creates doesn't only effect lesbian patients, but also lesbian doctors who feel that their jobs would be jeopardized if they came out at work.

According to Dr. Barrows, there are two primary reasons why lesbians don't seek medical care: lack of financial resources or insurance, and past negative experiences in the health care system. This translates into delayed care and, consequently, an increase in morbidity in the lesbian population. Dr. Barrows mentioned the myth that some doctors - and even some lesbians believe: that lesbians aren't at risk for HIV and sexually transmitted diseases and, therefore, don't need to seek medical care as much as straight women.

The dangers inherent in such thinking are obvious.

The most striking part of Dr. Barrows presentation were the personal quotes she shared about lesbians' experiences in the health care system, from doctors to patients who had been discriminated against or treated differently because of their sexual orientation. Most disturbing were the comments from women who didn't receive proper - if any - advice on safe sex from their doctors after mentioning they were lesbians, and the comments from women who were called names and stereotyped because they chose to come out to their health care providers. These shared experiences effectively presented the emotional hurt, as well as the medical dangers, that stem from such negative behavior.

Melissa Thomas is the director of the BEST Program for Women (Breast Education, Screening & Treatment) at the American Cancer Society in Columbus. She is actively involved in community outreach to minority women and works collaboratively with the Columbus Health Department and the YWCA EncorePlus Program to provide free medical care to women in financial need. - - info from Lesbian Health News

COMMUNITY EVENTS

LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP

Every Tuesday

7-9 p.m.

For info, write:

LSG

P.O. Box 1612

Mishawaka, IN 46544

Lavender Morning Valentine Dance

Saturday, Feb. 10th

8 p.m.-1 a.m.

People's Church

1758 N. 10th, Kalamazoo

\$7 - subscribers, \$9 - nonsubscribers

Child care provided, non-alcohol & non-smoking

EVENTS COORDINATORS

Third Friday Out: Jackie (219)-291-5837

OPEN ARMS STAFF

Sue (219)-272-3477

Sheree (616)-684-6365

Kaye & Marcia (219)-271-0338

Advertising: Kaye & Marcia

Subscriptions: Kaye & Marcia

EDITORIAL POLICY

We may edit any article submitted for length or content. We ask that all articles submitted be signed and typed, but will respect the wishes of the author by not printing her name if so requested.

PLEASE TYPE SUBMISSIONS IF POSSIBLE

If it is possible for you to type your submissions on a letter quality typewriter or printer, please do so using a 55 space line. This will make layout much easier.

Thanks.



3RD FRIDAY OUT

Mishawaka Brewing Company

3703 N. Main St., Mishawaka

Friday, Feb. 16th, 7:00 p.m.

For reservations, call Jackie by Wednesday, Feb. 14th, at (219)-291-5837

N.D. BASKETBALL

Feb. 7	Pittsburgh	7pm
14	Villanova	7pm
20	Miami	7pm

"Valentines"s Ceremony"

Come and help us celebrate the two hearts and lives of :

Lynette Metzger & PJ Wilk

We will be having a Union Ceremony on Valentine's Day. Also a perfect time for anyone wlse to give their life and love to the love of your life.

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Date: Feb. 14 th, 1996

Place: Southside Christian Church
1329 E. Jackson Rd., So. Bend

* Reception to follow ceremony

* Please RSVP 266-5967 and leave message if no answer.

UP AND COMING EVENTS

Mountain Moving Coffee House, Chicago

Feb. 10 Heather Bishop
for information write 1545 W. Morse or
call 312-477-8362

Concerts in Indianapolis

Feb. 1-4, 8-11, 1996 Judith Sloan's, "Denial of the Fittest"

Call: 317-637-2906

Apr. 12 Paula Poundstone (Clowe's Memorial Hall: (317)-921-6444

Olivia Cruises

Apr. 8-15, 1996 Grand Caribbean

Jun. 25-Jul. 3, 1996 Alaska

July, 1996 The Mediteranean:
France/Spain/Italy

October, 1996 Sonora Bay: Club Med Resort
call 1-800-631-6277 for information



"I WANT TO WAVE MY MAGIC WAND AND MAKE IT OKAY"

Michelle Abdill, 1953-1995



This is the most difficult column I've ever written. Not because Michelle Abdill and Roxie Ellis, the two women murdered in Oregon, are hard to write about. In these rural parts they were important to their various communities. Although I never had the honor of meeting them, many people I respect and care about were in their lives, either through PFLAG, other human rights organizations or lesbian social life.

My difficulty is a matter of restraint. I don't want to put incendiary thoughts to paper. I don't want to sow doubt, fear and hate. That's not what Roxie and Michelle were about.

In the week of horror and terror that included the announcement that two dykes were missing, the discovery of their bodies and the capture of a suspect, I learned a lot about these two women. They moved to Oregon about five years ago from conservative Colorado Springs, thinking they could be more free here. When the 1992 anti-gay initiative hit the Oregon ballot they fought to keep that new found freedom. Fought as OUT lesbians in a county that passed an anti-gay initiative. They did the same when the radical right attacked again in 1994.

Roxie was a mother and a grandmother. My friend Anna was in tears as she described how close Roxie and Lori and Lori's little daughter were. "They were just so cute together." Michelle's mom has a real estate business in the area and Michelle was a broker. Roxie and Michelle owned a property management business. At a sharing service I attended, testimony was given to their stature in the business community both by speakers and by the presence of so many non-gay business people, in particular, their fellow realtors.

When two activist friends of the women, partners who died within months of each other, entered their final AIDS-related illnesses, it was Michelle and Roxie who provided not just care, but care with class for Bill and Rex. Nor did Roxie and Michelle limit their volunteer work to gay people. They were active in their church where they commanded and received respect and inclusion.

How many of us can say we've done even half this much for our communities? How many of those of us who are left are appreciated like these women were? How many of us are willing to pick up their work and carry it on?

That is what makes this column so hard to write. I want to beat my chest and tear my hair and scream at the heavens. I try not to imagine what these women went through in their last hours. I want to go on and on about the newscast that showed a smirk on the face of the creature who has been charged with this outrage. I want to harangue you, and myself, until we - -

Until we what? Avenge the deaths of these vital women? Arm ourselves so it never happens again? Do a publicity blitz until the world acknowledges that gay murders do not happen in a vacuum? Wish the death penalty on their sick killer? Rage at the radical right for creating an atmosphere where women and gay people are so devalued that our lives are expendable? Pull the plug on hate radio to stop comments like, "They stoned people like this in the bible," and, "They deserved it" - - both of which listeners have reported hearing since the deaths.

As Elizabeth Hallett of Peace House in Ashland, Oregon, said at one sharing service, "Whatever the motive, Roxie and Michelle have been killed out of hate." The Medford Police Department is working on this case with great respect and sensitivity.

What I witnessed in this week of great tribulation was what Roxie and Michelle helped build. People pulled together as I could not have imagined. Our work since the Oregon Citizens Alliance began its onslaught, has created a magnificent population of people loving people, non-gays side by side with gays. I watch daily as we turn tragedy to triumph, turn hate to love, fear to courage.

A few days after the killings (how that word sticks in my throat) a lesbian said to me, "So are you gonna have a good Christmas?" She'd caught me between bouts of tears. "I'm trying," I told her, "but with what's happened this week, I can't even think of the holidays." The woman had come out well before gay liberation and lives by the old codes of the closet. "Yes," she said, "that was terrible, but we have to put it behind us now." I knew how she felt. Hadn't one of my first fearful reactions to the murders included thoughts of chucking my pen? But I said to her, "NO, WE CAN'T PUT THIS BEHIND US OR IT WILL NEVER STOP HAPPENING!"

Magnify my little display by thousands and you might have an inkling of the way this has touched Oregon.

Candace Steele, Northwest Regional Director of PFLAG, was very close to both women. Michelle had recently taken over the local PFLAG newsletter from Chuck Steele. The Steeles have two lesbian daughters. Their lives revolve around our human rights struggle. Candace is the more outgoing of the couple and it is impossible to be in her presence without feeling adopted and unconditionally loved. Bill and Rex were also family to the Steeles. Despite - - or because of - - their enormous losses this year, Candace has been the backbone of the community response to the murders. To be hugged by and to hug Candace is to know solace and inspiration - - and Candace has been dispensing hugs without reserve. She has also been talking to the police and the media, straight and gay, an indefatigable spokesperson. She has always been a heroine for me; now she is a paragon.

to be continued....

COURT OF FRIENDS

SINGLES

O.K. all you singles! Here's your opportunity to reach out to other singles. Write out what you want other singles to know about you, what you are looking for in another (be brief), and send to:

The Court of Friends

P.O.Box 1281

Niles, MI 49120

(Be sure to include your address.)

Your identity will be assigned an ID number. Your info and ID number will be published in OPEN ARMS. (It would be helpful if you would send your info early in the month so that it can be published in the next month's issue.) Also, O.A. reserves the right to edit, if necessary, for publication.

Those wishing to respond to an ID Single may do so by writing whatever you wish, putting it in a stamped, sealed envelope with the intended ID number on the front (in pencil). Place your message in another stamped envelope and mail to the above P.O.Box.

Upon receiving your message, the ID number will be replaced with the corresponding name and address and mailed. Then you're on your own. *COME ON SINGLES! Someone special wants to know you're out there!*

45. NEW YEAR / NEW LOVE. Will 1996 be our year? This GWPF, mid - 30's, seeks her feminine soulmate to help her rediscover life and love. Interests include golf, bowling, skiing, fishing, music, movies, theater, poetry, photography, nature and quiet evenings snuggling at home. Take a chance on this old - fashioned romantic; She's worth it!!!

46. Active 51 year old. I'm honest, gentle and loving. I enjoy camping, long walks, cards, chess, baseball games, dancing and just being together.

Looking for a woman between 45 - 60 with similar interest. Start with friendship and see what happens.

No drugs, non-drinker, no bi's, smoker O.K.

47 I am a 38 year old GWPF who enjoys gardening, music, sports and exercise. I am romantic, affectionate, honest and a non-smoker with an easy-going personality. I am looking for a non-smoker between the age of 38-48 who is somewhat feminine, enjoys outdoor activity, romantic dinners, sharing feelings and spending time together. If you take the time to write to me, I will write back to you.

48 I am an introspective SWPF seeking a SWPF in the 35 to 45 age category. I enjoy intellectually stimulating conversations with self-assured independent women. My interests include computers, reading, movies, music, fishing and swimming. I prefer a non-smoker. Children are ok but I am not overly fond of animals.

****I've had requests for clarification on Cap. letter descriptions. The wimin send these in and I don't know what all of them are. I would guess that S=single, W=white, P=professional. I can't guess what G equals, unless it is gorgeous. You could write to them and find out.

"If I had my life to live again, I'd make the same mistakes, only sooner." --Tallulah Bankhead



P.S. If you have any constructive ideas concerning ways to make this section better serve your needs, please write and share your ideas. Also, if you have something that you would like to say to our wimin, even though it is not an ad, please feel free to submit it.

The Lesbian Committee
St. Joseph Valley National Organization for Women

1995 Consumer information

We surveyed local businesses to identify those that are lesbian and gay-friendly. Enclosed is a summary of those we've polled in 1995. We asked the following questions and sent a self-addressed stamped envelope for easy reply. For more information, call 232-3278.

1. Do you welcome lesbians and gays at your business?
2. Would you hire a person who was qualified for an open position if you knew they were lesbian or gay?
3. If it came to your attention that one of your patients/clients was lesbian or gay, would you treat them the same?

We urge you to support the following businesses:

Attorneys

Lynn Chase, Bankruptcy Lawyer, S. 225 .

Michigan, So. Bd. 287-4999

Diane Shields Hillaert, 124 S. Race St., So. Bd.
256-0114

Florence Vamos, 124 S. Race St., So. Bd. 239-
2180

No response: Roslyn Amor, Tracey Anderson, Lynn Arnold,
Karla Boresi, Mary Ann Boulac, Kathleen Brickley, Janilyn
Brouwer, Deborah Brown, Kathleen Cekanski-Farrand,
Kimberly Finlaw, Jeanine Gozdecki, Anne Bruneff, Mary Kohn,
Barbara Roberts, Angela Russo, Deborah Tuttle, Julie
Verheyne

Chiropractors and Eye Doctors

Dr. Mark Troyer, Chiropractor, 1401 W. Indiana,
So. Bd. 232-6047

No response: Chiropractors—Dr. Cheryl Broderick, Dr. Karen
Mechler, Dr. Betty Parker, Eye—Dr. Alice Bacak, Dr. Rebecca
Long, Dr. Laura Pancow, Dr. Karen Pugh, Dr. Linnea
Robbins

Dentists and Dental offices

Becky Szabo, Szabo Family Dentistry, 2424 E.
Fifth, Mish. 259-1464

Bonni Boon, Michiana Dental Center, 734 E.
Ireland, So. Bd. 299-9300

No response: Dr. Lyn Albrecht, Dr. Jasmine Gabriel, Dr. Ellen
Wyant, Dr. Julie Gaydos, Dr. Nora Harmsen, Dr. Cynthia
Lindborg, Dr. Kathy March, Dr. Deborah Shriver, Dr. Amy
Sonneborn, Dr. Ellen Wyant, Dr. Janice Weaver

Restaurants: Dixie Way North or 31/33

Denny's Restaurant

Bonnie Doon

No response: Azar's Big Boy, Colonial Pancake House,
Damon's The Place for Ribs, Gipper's Cafe, The Great Wall
Chinese, King Gyros, Nicky's Cafe, Perkins Family
Restaurant, Ponderosa Steak House, Shoney's, The North
Village Landing

Doctors

Dr. Candace Corson, 6319 University Commons,
So. Bd.

Dr. Ellyn Stecker, 6319 University Commons, So.
Bd.

Dr. Etta Nevel, 515 N. Lafayette, So. Bd.

Dr. Jane Werth, 515 N. Lafayette, So.Bs. 232-
2037

No response: Dr. Nina Barbour, Dr. Sandra Brown, Dr. Ana
Cardenas, Dr. Nancy DeFlaugh, Dr. Ann Dilla, Dr. Gail
English, Dr. Dawn Fairley, Dr. Patricia Jordan, Dr. Nancy
Keller Madden, Dr. Sharon Lynch-Miller, Dr. Faye Magneson,
Dr. Mary Magneson, Dr. Mary Beth McClure, Dr. Michelle
Migliore, Dr. Jan Reineke, Dr. Carol Ann Royer, Dr. Barbara
Williams

Insurance Agents

Joyce Wegs, Equitable/Equico Securitites Inc., 425
Park Circle #100, Mish. 277-6110

Karen Cook, Taylor and Moyer Insurance, So. Bd.
287-2905

Christine Majewski, Farmers Insurance Group,
Osceola, 679-4704

Bonni Menting, State Farm Insurance, So. Bd.
291-8000

Donna Ainsworth, 414 W. High, Elkhart 293-4543

No response: Fawne Atkinson, Deb Childs, Geraldine Parhm,
Jean Peterson, Lois Holmgren, Catherine Guidi.

Real Estate

Penny Hughes, Hughes Investments, 106
Lincolnway East, Mish. 291-2342 or 291-2482

Bookstores

Erasmus Books, 1027 E. Wayne. So. Bd. 232-
8444



A big hug and thank you to the beautiful wimin who shared in celebrating my 53rd. birthday. It was a cold, *Thrid-Fri.-Out*, but your surprise warmed my heart and I do thank you so very much! Special thanks to my partner, Julie, and to Jackie, *Third-Fri.-Out* Coordinator and friend.

Gloria

SALMONBERRIES

Any one?

Is there anyone out there that liked the movie *SALMONBERRIES*, at all? So far, I have not been able to find one person who liked it, or even said that she understood it. I believe it is an exceptionally brilliant film. I feel that it is extremely insightful, and touches precisely the depth of the struggle we Lesbians have experienced in coming to know and accept ourselves. Is it only older Lesbians who have experienced this challenge? I haven't even heard of any older Lesbians liking or understanding the film. I put this film right up there with *DESERT HEARTS* and *CLAIRE OF THE MOON*. What's going on here?

If anyone out there feels about *SALMONBERRIES* in a way similar to how I feel, please write O.A. and let me know about you. Please share with me any of your appreciation for this work of art. I'll get back to you.

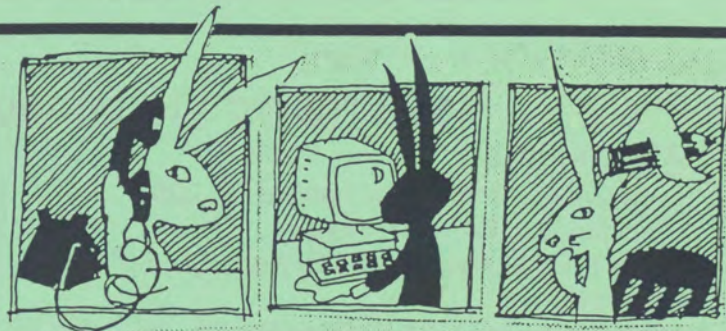
Gee, even the theme song with, "I'd walk through the snow barefoot, if you'd open up your door" is enough to make my heart soar. I don't understand. Dear reader, please respond!.....Cookie



Michiana Momazons

A meeting and potluck will be held at Linda's and Patti's in South Bend on February 18, 4:00 p.m.

Call 237-1021 for directions. Kids are welcome. Please bring their favorite toys and games. Bring a dish to pass and whatever you're drinking.



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February

1996

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3  Birthday Wishes to Marge
4	5	6 Support Group 7:00 p.m.	7	8	9	10 Lavender Morning Valentine Dance 8 pm-1 am Kalama- zoo
11 Open Arms Meet- ing 6:30 p.m.	12	13 Support Group 7:00 p.m.	14  Reserva- tions due for 3rd Friday Out	15	16 Third Friday Out 7:00 p.m.	17
18	19	20 Support Group 7:00 p.m.	21	22	23	24
25 PFLAG Meeting 2:00-4:00 p.m.	26	27 Support Group 7:00 p.m.	28	29		

Open Arms Financial Statement

12/16/94 - 12/15/95

Beginning Bank Balance	\$ 753.69	
Income:		
Subscriptions (new & renewal)	1000.00	
Advertising	82.00	
Donations	<u>61.50</u>	
	\$1897.19	
Expenditures:		
Postage	\$439.44	
Paper & Envelopes	132.40	
Photocopying	69.79	
PO Box Rent	40.00	
Banking Charges	30.50	
H.O.C. (helping our community)	<u>250.00</u>	
	\$ 962.13	
Ending Bank Balance	\$935.06	

THANKS, THANKS, AND THANKS again to our PHOTO-COPYING FRIEND. The photocopying charge in the financial statement is for two months when our schedules did not allow for the free copying that we usually receive. This free copying has allowed *Open Arms* to help our community by making donations to individuals or groups as their needs are identified.

MISSION STATEMENT

Open Arms exists to disseminate diverse information of interest to the Michiana lesbian community.

OPEN ARMS DEADLINE/MEETING

The deadline for submissions for the March newsletter is February 8th. Submissions received after February 8th may not be published in the March newsletter. Mail submissions to *Open Arms*, P.O. Box 845, Mishawaka, IN 46546 or give to any staff member. New and renewal subscriptions are \$10.00/year. Make checks payable to *Open Arms*. Please include your name, address, and telephone number. Mail to: P.O. Box 845, Mishawaka, In. 46546. Newsletter Meeting Feb. 11, 6:30 p.m. For information 271-0338